

Raritan Historic & Cultural Committee

April 19, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of April 19, 2017 was called to order at 7:00pm.
Minutes for the Meeting of April 19, 2017 are below.

MEMBERS PRESENT AT MEETING:

Jim Fidacaro, President; Jane Fidacaro, Vice President; Karen Eastlund, Treasurer; Tim Rack, Secretary; Al Capetta; Marie Lombardy; Joyce Tronolone; Jim Foohey

PUBLIC ATTENDEES:

Ned Lombardy

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reported that we currently have \$595.15 in the Committee's trust fund and \$1000 from the Borough budget. The Borough voted to increase our operating budget to 1,000 dollars in the 2017 budget. We will pay out \$250 for the Alexander Hamilton presentation.

Old Business:

Walking Tour – The Committee continues to sell copies of the walking tour booklets in the Library. The Heritage Trail Association of Somerset County has requested that we schedule a walking tour sometime in September. It was decided that September 16 will be the tour date and Jane, Marie and Karen have agreed to conduct the tour. We will have additional 50 tour books printed for each tour.

Veterans of War Park – Plans for the park have been finalized, with construction to be completed by September 2017. Two memorial stones will be moved from the Borough Hall. The County plans on adding lighting and electrical outlets as well.

Speakers Bureau – The Library and the Historic Committee are sponsoring Alexander Hamilton from the American History Theater on April 22 at 1PM at the Library. Cost will be \$ 600 plus expenses. The Committee agreed to pay \$250 with the Library covering the balance.

Cataloging of Historic Items – All materials have been moved from our former office in the old school to the upper floor of the firehouse. It still needs to be sorting and cataloged.

Slide Presentation – The Committee is creating Powerpoint slide presentation of Raritan's history to be presented to schools and Senior Citizen groups. Tim Rack created the slides and Jim Fidacaro, Jane Fidacaro, and Marie Lombardy will create captions. volunteered to assist with the creation of the PowerPoint presentation. Jim Foohey suggested we create a two disc set on the history of Raritan, one disk with the slide show and the other containing the historical interviews. This could be sold to raise money for the Committee.

Washington School Artifacts – Jim Fidacaro met with Matt Loper of Somerset County regarding preserving some items from Washington School when it is demolished. A monument has been designed and will be installed along First Avenue after the school has been demolished. Demolition is slated to start sometime in April, with a July completion date.

Picture Book – Marie Lombardy volunteered to create a Then and Now book of old and new pictures of Raritan for publication. There is no progress reported yet.

History of Fire Department – Jim Fidacaro and Al Capetta recorded an interview with Carl Memoli on March 11. Carl's presentation was one of the best to date as he is very knowledgeable about the history of the Raritan Fire Department. The interview is available in the Library.

Veterans History Project – Al Capetta suggested we create a history of each of the veterans depicted on the Banners. This would include photos, stories, and other facts. This will be started after the Fire Department History is completed.

League of Historical Societies of NJ – The Committee has joined the League of Historical Societies of NJ. The annual cost is \$40 and the League advertises events and holds workshops on different topics.

Elevator for Fire House – Jim Fidacaro met with Don Esposito on January 25 regarding funding for the installment of an elevator to the second floor of the Anderson Street Fire House. One of original grants from the Somerset County Historical Commission was to refurbish the 2nd floor into a meeting room. There was some discussion among the Committee as to whether an elevator was needed if the firehouse becomes a museum. Further discussion will occur when we get additional information.

2017 Goals – The Committee would like to complete the following goals for 2017:

- Complete the PowerPoint presentation
- Write and publish the Then and Now book
- See to the completion of Veterans Park and the Washington School Memorial
- Connect with the League of Historical Societies of NJ
- Identify veterans from earlier wars from Raritan so they can be honored
- Expand displays of historical artifacts by utilizing the new library addition
- Broaden involvement of other people into the Committee

Library Displays – The Committee created a display of artifacts in one of the new Library display cases. We plan on doing different themes throughout the year. Karen Eastlund suggested we create a display of old lunch boxes near the beginning of the school year. To that end, Karen asked the Committee to loan her any old lunch boxes they may have.

NJ History Fair - The annual NJ History Fair will be at Monmouth Battlefield State Park on May 13. Tim Rack suggested the members attend, with the possible goal of having a booth and display there at a future date.

Historic Fire House Directors - The Mayor may ask the Historic and Cultural Committee to oversee work being done on the historic firehouse. The plan is to ensure that only work specified in the grant is completed and not extra or alternate construction.

Vacancy - There is still an opening on the Committee. Jim Fidacaro asked the members to put forth anyone that may be interested.

Election of Officers - Elections were held within the Committee with all current officers being confirmed to continue in those positions.

2017 Meeting Dates - 2017 meetings of the Historic and Cultural Committee will be held on the following dates:

June 21

July 19

August 16

September 20

October 18

November 15

December 20

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Motion was approved and meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Rack, Secretary